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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AmEmbassy BAGHDAD

491

DESP. NO

February 2, 1957

DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

REF :

SUBJECT: Comment on "Time" Magazine Article on King Saud

UNCLASSIFIED

Following the appearance on Baghdad newstands of the issue of Time which featured an article on King SAUD and Saudi Arabia, several prominent figures expressed their public disapproval of the article and condemned the editors of the magazine.

Shaikh Muhammad al-MUTLAQ, Chargé d'Affaires of the Saudi Arabian Embassy, was reported by al-Zaman (independent) to have described the article as part of a campaign against the Arab nation conducted by Zionists. He stated that the text included lies and obvious "forgeries". By way of explanatory comment, al-Zaman added that Time had discussed the private life of H.M. King Saud, "who is the person upon whom the United States bases its hopes for the reinforcement of stability in the Middle East".

Another Baghdad newspaper, al-Akhbar (independent), sought the views of Amin al-MUMAIYIZ, Director General of Arab Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on this subject. Mumaiyiz asserted that this article, which had been printed in a magazine financed by the Zionists as a vehicle for Zionist propaganda, was a tissue of lies directed at injuring the reputation of Saudi Arabia. "This magazine," he said, "has seized the opportunity of King Saud's visit to the United States to publish this prejudicial propaganda. Time has always distorted facts and has published this just to harm the reputation of the Arab countries thereby serving Israel."

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COMMENT:

The reaction which the article evoked in Baghdad illustrates the extreme sensitivity of most Arab peoples to any matter, truth as well as falsehood, which tends to show the "Arab Nation" in an unfavorable light to the rest of the world. Since the article was adjudged unfavorable, it was quite natural it should be ascribed to Zionism.

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REPORTER(S)

For the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

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Nicholas G. Thacher

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